



**HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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*Your Home  
Is Our  
Business*

February 18, 2011

To: Senator Steve Cassano, Co-Chairman  
Representative Linda M. Gentile, Co-Chairman  
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Bill Ethier, Chief Executive Officer

Re: Senate Bill 896, An Act Making Procedural Changes to the Site Plan and Subdivision Application Process

**The HBA of Connecticut is a professional trade association with 1,100 member firms statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut citizens. Our members, all small businesses, are residential and commercial builders, land developers, home improvement contractors, trade contractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. Our members build 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in the state each year.**

**We support SB 896 as the right way to process subdivision and site plan applications.** As we outlined in our testimony on SB 491, Connecticut's land use system has it backwards and for too many decades we have empowered the public with reacting at the wrong end of our system of reviewing economic development and housing proposals. **I refer you to our testimony on SB 491 for further background on our current, backwards system.** Our testimony on SB 491 explains the administrative nature of subdivision and site plan applications and the requirement of reviewing such applications only for their compliance with existing zoning and subdivision regulations. This administrative task is best performed by professional paid staff of local commissions.

**Further, SB 896 not only preserves the authority of local planning and zoning commissions to adopt the plan of conservation and development as well as all zoning and subdivision regulations (i.e., shaping each respective town as these commissions desire) but also will invigorate those processes by establishing a system that prioritizes the public's involvement at the front end of our system where the real differences in our communities are made.**

**Much of what needs to be done to make Connecticut more inviting to growth and jobs is how we conduct the business of establishing our land use plans, the rules for conservation and development and how we review and approve new developments and growth.** Other changes are also necessary, such as requiring that the rules of development are objective and clear, eliminating subjective criteria that leads to indiscriminate discretion, eliminating the referrals of as-of-right subdivisions and site plans to special permit processes that are replete with unlimited discretion, limiting frivolous appeals, and a host of other changes. **But SB 896 is a positive start and we ask you to support it.** Thank you for considering our comments on this important legislation.

*"Leading Our Members to Professional Excellence."*

**Serving the Residential Development & Construction Industry Through Advocacy, Education & Networking**